

21 May 1993

STAT

The Honorable John W. Warner  
Select Committee on Intelligence  
SH-211 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warner:

As Virginians, we are happy to see that you are the current Vice Chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence. We have had a long association with the Intelligence Committees of both houses of Congress. (Barbara Colby of Arlington is the divorced wife of former CIA Director, William E. Colby.

STAT  of McLean is the wife of forty years of a senior intelligence officer, now retired.) Our interest is in legislation to protect former spouses of CIA clandestine officers.

Important progress has been made, beginning with the landmark legislation introduced by the Intelligence Committees and passed in 1982. Attached to this letter is a summary brochure prepared by the CIA for distribution to spouses who are faced with divorce. We have also attached copies of the two versions of a recently completed Former Spouse Handbook. One edition is for spouses of overt employees and one is for spouses of covert employees.

When Representative Barbara Kennelly was Chairman of the Legislative Subcommittee of the House Intelligence Committee, she held a hearing on May 22, 1991 to review the laws as well as to review the administrative efforts of the CIA relating to former spouses and retirees. As a result, the Intelligence Authorization Act of 1991 amended the CIA Retirement and Disability System Act to remove the five-year-overseas residence requirement for former spouses of CIA employees in order to become eligible for retirement or survivor benefits.

When this legislation was enacted Congress was unable to cover the small group of former spouses who had been divorced prior to the date the law was changed, because it would have created a new entitlement without a source of funding having been identified.

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We direct your attention to HR 981 in which Representative Kennelly seeks to address the special needs of this group. HR 981 would enable spouses divorced prior to April 1991 to receive on a prospective basis retirement and survivor benefits equivalent to the amount they would have presumptively been awarded provided they meet the other requirements of qualification as "former spouse". In addition they would have improved access to federal health insurance benefits.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your staff and provide further background on this issue.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Colby



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